

CHRISTUS-CENTURIARUM

-JAMES-DAVIDSON-DINGWELL-

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CHRISTUS CENTURIARUM

Christus Centuriarum

BY

JAMES DAVIDSON DINGWELL

Author of "The Closing Century's Heritage"



BOSTON

RICHARD G. BADGER

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DEDICATION
TO MY PARENTS

FOREWORD

Believing that Jesus is God's answer to the possibilities of humanity, and "the keystone of the arch which spans the gulf of time," this poem is sent forth to the world as an added tribute to His greatness, and as the author hopes an added tribute to His influence. It has been the feeling of the author that no original imaginings of man can improve upon the imagery of the gospel record, and consequently, parable, legend and historic fact, have been suggestions whereby the temporal letter has served the purpose of magnifying the Word made flesh—the Abiding Personality.

J. D. D.

Amesbury, Mass., June, 1909.

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*If Jesus Christ is a man,
And only a man, I say,
That of all mankind I cleave to him,
And to him would I cleave alway.*

*"If Jesus Christ is a God,
And the only God, I swear,
I will follow him through heaven and hell,
The earth, the sea and the air."*

Richard Watson Gilder.

CHRISTUS CENTURIARUM

PROLOGUE

O God, the Author of all truth,
In whom we live and think and move,
Help us anew Thy mind to trace
Through Him who came Thy love to
prove.

The world could not perceive in full
The truth of God He had to bring;
But as the sower plants the seed,
So He the germs, that root in spring.

Germes of a heart, a mind, a soul,
Potential with thoughts' golden grain;
But ripened only by the laws
Of sun, and shower, and time, and pain.

We would not now the final word
Lay claim to as the last and whole;
We only ask our fullest share
Of Him, the centuries' flying goal.

And so we come with wholesome fear,
And wholesome yearning of the mind,
Assured that into all the truth,
Thy Spirit waits to guide mankind.

Forgive us if we search to know,
Things not intended for our day:
Restrain us when too bold we grow,
Impatient of Thy Sovereign sway.

But grant us in our circumstance
A love for truth where'er it leads;
Persuaded that the part man finds
Is less than Him on whom he feeds.

And as we ponder o'er Thy life
Revealed in Him who came to earth,
Our faith increase, our thoughts refine,
And teach us heaven's immortal worth.

THE MESSIANIC HOPE

Far back, beyond the written word,
Within our fleshly human heart,
Thou didst implant a hunger there
For truth, and peace, and rest, apart.

Before Egyptians chiseled stone,
Or Moses carved Mount Sinai's laws,
A voice within cried out for God,
And sought Him as effect seeks cause.

Though vague and pathless was the quest,
Down through the ages stage by stage,
It prophesied the coming day
Revealed in Scriptures' written page.

Fire, air, and water, Golden calf—
Gods great, gods many, swift and strong;
Gods in whom nations placed their trust
Through fears and superstitions, long.

But day at last began to dawn,
And Israel's heart and mind discerns
That power and wisdom both unite,
To perfect laws for earth's concerns.

The heavens, the earth, the day, the night,
Sun, moon, and stars, and beast, and herb,
And crowning all, God's image,—man
The last, the highest, most superb.

God's image man! In whole or part;
It matters not. The die is cast.
The race has caught a vision clear
Which far excells the groping past.

Man in his maker's image made;
Not in perfections rounded whole;
But, with inceptive powers to rise,
And God's own nature to extol.

Man to himself reveals his God,
And in his soul begins the quest,
For perfect God, and perfect man,
The gift of time to manifest.

But first-born man has missed the mark;
He violates his proffered power;
Full well he knows that sin has robbed,
His manhood, in a treacherous hour.

But knowing once its guileless mind,
And conscience void of ache and stain,
He searching turns and prays of heaven,
The man to "bruise" the serpent's pain.

And as the cycles come and go,
And manhood rises with the tide,
Each ebb and flow a gain records
Toward Him, the heart's long-propheied;

Until, at last, subjective thirst,
Breaks forth in clear prophetic word,
Announcing in Isaiahic tones
The meek, the mighty, suffering Lord.

He whom the world so long has sought,
Comes now at last in person fair;
The heart-throbs of the ages past
Are angel-chorused on the air.

THE INCARNATION

Speak Thou to us the faith we need
To tread this path of mystery,
Where reason's laws must humbly bow
To life and deeds of history.

Its truth is hallowed by their claims;
We recognize the fruit and flower;
We feel that something here transcends
The common bloom of natal hour.

Yet what it is, and how it is,
We crave to see with clearer eye;
We long such knowledge to attain,
Though rest secure in Thy supply.

Is Christ incarnate so removed
From all Thy earthly human laws,
Of love, and home, and off-spring pure,
That here we're forced in awe to pause?

Is this the explanation true
As handed down through scribe and scroll,
And magnified through priest and creed
As vital tenent of the soul?

Shall these the condemnation seal
Of all who Thomas-like of old
Cry out for proof, cannot believe,
Except as fact and faith behold?

Or, is there other path to take
Upholding all, condemning none?
Exalting Christ as Son of God
And Son of man, in union one?

Humanity divinely born;
Divinity in human form;
Transmitted in our day of need
To show us God's intended norm,

For all the future sons of men;
When God incarnate lives within;
And as in heaven Thy will is done—
Observed in earth,—man conquers sin:

When all the future sons of men
Shall climb to heights of purity;
And truth, and justice, shall prevail
Incarnate in society.

This hope through Christ we all do share;
In spite of many questions grave,
Of virgin birth, and advent strange,
Imposed by man the world to save.

The Christ is here. We may not know
In fulness, how He ever came;
But we believe with John "beloved",
That He, the dark world's light, shall
reign.

And so with Mary we would sing,
My soul doth magnify the Lord!
My spirit hath rejoiced in God!
For Jesus Christ, the Living Word.

THE NATIVITY

Augustus issued Rome's decree
That all the world should be enrolled:
And this for Jewish natives born
Meant journey to ancestral fold.

Forth to the highways in response
Descendants of the twelve tribes go;
Each to his own historic shrine,
A patriot's virtue to bestow.

They climb the rocky mountain roads
That led from valleys far and near,
To where the name should be inscribed
Which honored ancient king and seer.

Among the pilgrims on that march
That dotted every province way,
Were Joseph, and his wife espoused,
Whose journey filled them with dismay.

But up and down the hills they toiled,
Day in and out, from morn to night,
Till ancient town of Bethlehem
Rose full and clear in sunset light.

And as the curtained shades of eve
Enclosed the world from light of day,
The travellers twain from Nazareth
Approach with joy the inn, but nay,—

Its every couch is occupied;
No room within for further guest;
The tired and anxious Nazarenes
An ox-stall share, for prayer and rest.

And lo, the hour of time has come
For God His purpose to fulfil
Through Mary, chosen child of earth,
To magnify the Father's will.

Unnoticed by the crowd that night
That sheltered in the ancient town
The mother of our Lord fore-saw
Ere morning's light, her promised crown.

The hours advanced; distractions ceased,
Save now and then for restless beast,
Whose yawning sigh and brutal speech
A friendship lent, by no means least.

And though they could not sympathise
In thoughts and words of moral worth,
A cradle for the infant king
They furnished, when He came to earth.

But while the inmates of the town
Were unaware of God's bequest,
The very planets in their course
And angels, summoned East and West.

"Glory to God and peace on earth"!
Resounded o'er Judean hills,
Fear not, the Saviour Christ is born,
Go forth and greet with hearts and wills,

Go forth ye humble shepherds go,
March on ye wise men from the East,
The Leader of the race is born,
The Prince of God, the great High Priest.

The star that thus far led thee on
Thy quest of life will not conceal;
Gold, frankincense, and myrrh bestow;
The symbols of thy love reveal.

No Herod can His destined power
Abort through fiendish treachery;
No scheme of death so premature
Can foil the God of history.

His length of days and light of life
Are guarded by a higher law;
No infant Christ His part can play;
No sword of King, His sway withdraw.

Though cradled in an ox's crib,
And born of peasant blood and race,
No power on earth can end His days
Till God's wise purpose man can trace.

THE CHILDHOOD

The laws of life He knew on earth
Were normal laws of love and care;
The world in which He came to live
His manhood shaped, and helped prepare;

No super-human powers invade
Parental wisdom's sacred sphere,
To guide and teach the Christ-child life
In hallowed scope, from year to year.

The laws of state, and church, and home,
Revered by customs long observed;
The laws of worship, work, and play,
By Him were practised and conserved.

From childhood's circumcision rite
And temple's dedication vow,
To manhood's wish by Jordan's banks
And unto death submission's bow,—

To all that customs' laws imposed
In reason for the world's best good;
He shared with all the sons of God
Revealing man's true brotherhood.

In wisdom, stature, soul and sense,
He grew as grow all wholesome boys;
He thought, He toiled, He prayed, He
played;
He learned earth's cares; He knew earth's
joys.

The play-ground of His childhood town
From which rang laughter's music sweet;
The games of Nazareth's boys and girls
In grassy fields and pavéd street,

These all He shared with childish glee;
God's gifts of grace to innocence;
The kindergarten of the soul,
Which fits for greater eminence.

Thus, at the early age of twelve,
We read the proofs of nurture wise;
A body, mind, and soul, alert;
E'en learned doctors to advise.

A Jewish mother's fruits of hope—
That king of men her son might be,
Messiah of the chosen race,
A tribute to maternity.

Her strength for hour of sacrifice,
Her balm for hour of care-worn mind
Her cause of tearful anxious soul
When Christ 'mong travellers none could
find.

"My Son, why hast thou dealt with us?
Behold thy parents' sorrowing heart!
Three days have passed in anxious search
Since we were signalled to depart".

"Ah mother mine, dost thou not know
My duty to the Father's will?
Hast thou not taught me all my life
His business always to fulfil?"

Hast thou not stamped upon my mind
The truth that in Him all do live?
Wouldst thou be pleased should I withhold
From Him, the best I have to give”?

The truth He uttered proved too deep;
They understood not what He meant;
They had not thought of heaven’s will
With reaches, to such vast extent.

The letter of the law they taught,
And lived it in their simple way;
But consecration’s fullest vow
Which led to heights where they could
say,—

“Our wills are not our own, but Thine,”
They had not reached, nor could they see
How Jesus gained such heights sublime
Where one with God He longed to be.

THE SILENT YEARS

With throbbing heart and mind aroused
He trod the road to childhood home,
Companionless in heights of thought
And visions of the kingdom's dome,—

Assured that in God's time and way
The ebbing tide to earthly sight
Would rise anew with fuller power
And flood the world with clearer light.

How long 'twould take He knew not then,
Nor questioned God's intent or plan,
But followed present duty plain
Which makes of youth the master man.

For eighteen long and quiet years
Obscurely there He waits in life,
And work-shop toil, and household care
Were school days for a holy strife.

He roamed the fields and climbed the hills
He watched the corn-blades natural modes,
He studied lilies sumptuous garbs
Surpassing royal purple robes.

That mountains hallowed by the past
Should be impressed upon His mind,
As symbols of God's sovereign might
And proofs of wisdom heaven-designed,

That all the things so common place
Should fill so full His mind and heart,
And fit Him in His later years
God's truths so vital to impart,

That depths of God's eternal love,
And pledge of God's eternal care,
In parable from field and flower
Should be disclosed with wisdom rare,—

Was due, no doubt, in part at least,
To Nazareth's quiet hours of thought,
Upon the themes of God and man,
Writ large for all who would be taught.

For Nazareth's life was wonderous rich
In study of God's will for earth;
No sins of demarkation gulfed
Broad chasms, through descent and birth.

The daily life of toil and care,
And intercourse in friendship sweet;
The sense that none lived to himself
But each helped other's life complete;

These things to Nazareth lent an air,
Productive of a healthy mind,
For study of the will of God
Related to all human-kind.

Man's worth as man before his God,
The Christ of Nazareth learned to prize;
And when unto His work He went
No class distinction dimmed His eyes.

To Nicodemus, ruler, wise;
To Dives, rich man, of his day;
To sin-stained Mary Magdalene,
One path to God, one common way.

It mattered not what words He used;
What symbol, to express His thought;
Devotion to the will of God
All lives must share, less would be naught.

This single eye for truth He learned
To practice in these silent years,
And courage to declare God's will
Without respect of man, or fears.

THE DAWNING HOURS OF ACTIVITY

The man sent forth from God had cried,
 “He comes! He comes! The Lord draws
 near!

The Lord whom I as simple voice
 Now herald in advance with fear:”

For Him rough places must be smoothed;
 And crooked ways must straightened be;
The voice of prophet-bard declares
 ‘Jehovah’s glory, earth shall see’.

The hands upon the dial of time
 Have reached the hour when He should
 come
To blaze the trail with whiter light
 And lead the way to setless sun.

“Behold the Lamb of God! He comes!
 He takes away the world’s great sin”,
And John and Andrew leave their chief
 For one who quiets life within.

The Light that lighteth every man
 Is here at last with heavenly peace;
“I can with water but baptize;
 He shall abide; I must decrease.

No longer shall He secret live
In preparation's school for power,
Nor turn aside from strife and sin
Until Golgotha's conquering hour.

THE BAPTISM

No formal ceremonial rite
 Had hitherto His mission sealed;
No happening to the present hour
 Had to Himself His work revealed,

In reach and scope becoming one
 As Lord and Master of us all;
As friend and Saviour of the race
 With outstretched hand to those who fall.

As John the multitude baptized
 Unto confession of their sin,
With water from the Jordan stream,
 Christ saw untouched the life within.

And yet He recognized the form
 As symbol of a cleansing power;
And prayed the priest for earthly seal
 Prophetic of the heavenly dower.

But John drew back: "It cannot be
 I needs must be baptized of Thee;
This rite to sin alone applies;
 Forego Thy wish, for Thou art free."

But Jesus pressed His heartfelt-need—
 "All righteousness fulfilled must be,"
And John with trembling hands baptized
 God's sinless man from Galilee.

O act of Jesus unexcelled
Throughout the intervening years!
Help us to trace its child-like faith
Through this and all Thy faltering fears.

Help us to trace Thy growing sense
And consciousness of life divine;
Help us to see the human steps
Through which Thou passed in earth's confine.

To recognize that step by step
The sense of duty giveth light;
To see that God can only guide
The willing soul in ways of right.

To comprehend that heaven's gift
To such obedience of God's Son
Bestowed the Spirit like a dove
And cried, Thou art beloved; well done.

O day of grace by Jordan's banks
That sealed from heaven our Saviour's
choice
Of service to the sons of men
Through rent of sky and Spirit's voice,

That gave to Jesus in that hour
Assurance deep of God's intent:
Confirmed His public ministry
And fixed secure His faith as sent:

That filled Him with a sense sublime
Of ministry to earthly sin,
That cleansed not merely outward faults
But touched the springs of life within,

Help us in all our faltering fears
And faltering steps in earth's ascent,
To catch and breathe Thy fellowship
In harmony with God's intent.

THE TEMPTATION

The voice had scarcely ceased to sound,
The dove had hardly flown away,
When Jesus felt upon His mind
A load of care that caused dismay.

“Beloved Son” and “Lamb of God”,
“And bearer of the world’s great sin”,
Proved language laden with a truth
That mortal courage shrank within.

O who am I that God should thrust
Such weight sublime upon my heart?
O what am I that God should dare
Commit to me so great a part?

With searchings thus He turned away
From Jordan’s banks to mountain height,
Alone with God, and self, and sin,
To learn temptation’s treacherous might.

The vision of that Jordan scene
Pursued Him in His mountain flight,
As on, and up, the steeps He climbed
Unheedful of the black of night.

One thought alone impelled Him on,—
To learn of heaven the Father’s will,
And with its knowledge to obtain
A strength, its precepts to fulfil.

Alone with God He paced and prayed
On dreary mountain slopes with fear,
Recalling John's prophetic words
Of God's Messiah drawing near.

He knew that same prophetic hope
In Israel's heart by prophet spoke;
He felt the need of coming king
To break oppression's fettering yoke.

But O, to take to self the claim
Of filling full earth's groping quest;
And answering, "Here am I O Lord
This search of heart to manifest."

This, to the man from Galilee,
Of humble birth and peasant blood,
Beyond His comprehension seemed,
And so the voice of God withstood,

For long and weary days and nights
Upon the mountain fastness lone;
Till test of soul suppressed His fears
And flesh and blood their sin atone.

The tempter watched for crucial hour,
When body weakened by the strain
Began to hunger for its need
Of bread, to nourish and sustain.

And as a stone lay at His feet
In oval shape like shew-bread baked,
His sinking body thrilled with joy
As in His mind a vision waked,

Of home and food and mother-care,
In quiet Nazareth's frugal town,
Where daily needs no surfeit knew
But famine never crushed men down.

And as that vision sent a thrill
Throughout His weakling, hungering
frame,
The lurking enemy of God
Came forth "as light" with test profane;

"If Thou art really Son of God,
Command these stones to turn to bread;
Starve not Thy body longer Lord,
When by a word Thou may'st be fed".

But Jesus clutched the Unseen Hand,
As heart and brain the tempter vied,
And with triumphant faith exclaimed
"My God, stay Thou close by my side".

"God's laws, not my desires fulfil;
God's will, my wants, make not supreme;
Man shall not live by bread alone
In testing hour of life's extreme;"

“But by the very power of God,
That bids our fleshly senses bide
The higher laws of heart and mind—
The Spirit’s realm to feed and guide”.

But lo, another spectre flashed
Across His haggard form and brain
From pinnacles of temple heights,—
“Cast down thyself; God will sustain;

“He’ll give His angels charge o’er Thee;
Alone, Thou need’st not risk Thy life;
Their hands shall bear Thee up secure;
Protect Thee from the ills of strife;

“Attest Thyself the Son of God;
Prove to the world Thy sovereign power;
Transcend the laws of rule and growth;
Thy kingship show this very hour”.

“O carnal spirit, would’st thou rob
The soul of man its power supreme?
Would’st thou for selfish glory pluck
The flower of manhood from God’s
scheme?

“Would’st thou place thought of earth’s ap-
plause
Above obedience to God’s will?
Would’st thou deny man’s soul the joy
Of highest duty to fulfil”?

Again from mountain peak sublime,
He showed to Christ earth's kingdoms all,
And offered Him their wide domain
If prostrate at his feet He'd fall.

But Jesus rising in His might,
Supreme in Spirit now o'er earth,
Reveals the truth His soul has won,
Proclaims through faith eternal worth.

Bread, power and glory, all must fade
In presence of the soul's demands;
"Hence tempter, with thy luring charms!
Hence from my presence! God commands!

The Lord Thy God shalt worshipped be,
Him only shalt thou serve in fear;
Thy pretexts for His power within
Are insults to a vision clear,

Of duty to the Father's will,
Wrought out through moral conflict sore;
But reached at last with faith serene
When Spirit rules and flesh gives o'er".

The tempter leaves; the fight is won;
A calm comes o'er His weakened frame;
A sense of God is every where;
Earth's glories cheer and speak His name.

God's handi-work in earth and sky
Bespeaks His angel-ministering care,
The desert vanisheth, and lo
The haunting voices change to prayer,

As down the mountain side He walks
To join again His fellow-man,
And preach with Spirit's power endued
God's gospel in redemption's plan.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The summum bonum of Thy heart,
The Alpha and Omega sought,—
God's kingdom, with its rule divine,
God's reign on earth, in act and thought.

Thy first and last words to the world
Were laden with its hope and sway,
Thy prayers and parables disclosed
Its coming fulness day by day.

The inequalities of life;
The sins of selfishness supreme;
The unjust standards of the day
The chosen peoples selfish dream,—

The Saviour of the world deplored;
His heart of love they pierced with pain;
He saw the motives underneath
No higher rise than earthly gain:

He saw that reign of God within
Was foreign to their spirit's sense;
He knew that only life divine
Their course could change and recompense.

“Repent! God's kingdom is at hand;
He bids all men its spirit learn;
He wills all men its life to share;
All men its enemies to spurn.

The Spirit of Almighty God
Hath seized on me His truth to preach
To herald the awakening day
Of heaven on earth—God's goal to reach.

Announce good tidings to the poor;
Proclaim release to captives bound;
To blind and groping, sight restore;
And freedom sing the world around;

Make plain to men what e'er their state
That God within alone sets free;
That outward good is but a show
Unless with single eye they see;

That purple fine of rarest hue
May clothe a heart and mind obscene;
That rags of poverty despised
In sight of God may robe a queen;

That speech ornate with unctuous breath
May utter but an empty tone;
That broken words from empty heart
May mount as incense to God's throne;

That Pharisaic righteous acts
May signify but heart of stone;
That single deed, sincere, though small
By sinner may the past atone;

That gifts of gold from treasure full
May little seem in sight of God;
The widow's mite from penury
May prove a gift to sound abroad;

That whitened sepulchres without
 May full of putrification be;
That sordid, seared, and sin-stained face
 May know the joy of God to see.

O tempter tried, and Lord of life,
 We glory in Thy sovereign sway,
That makes the heart the proof of deed,
 Disrobes mere form of bold display;

That opens wide the heart of God
 To rich and poor, to bond and free,
On one condition, one just plane,—
 A life of love in equity.

This, to the world Thou didst reveal
 In daily deed while here with men,
No theories from Thy mind evolved
 Abstract and cold for now, not then.

Occasion present, urgent, just,
 Thy actions, and Thy teachings knew,
Thy preaching and Thy practice one,
 No work of word didst Thou eschew.

When words seemed easier than works,
 And doubt seemed natural to man's mind,
The palsied walked at Thy command,
 The moistened clay gave sight to blind.

“Talitha cumi” Thou didst speak
 To sleeping maid serene in death,
To storm-tossed waves of Galilee
 A calm Thou speakest with a breath.

But greater than Thy wonder-works,
Which so appealed to carnal mind,
Were daily deeds of truth and love,
With blessings rich for all mankind.

The truth and love of Golden Rule,
That reached the heart and mind and will,
That healed the inner springs of life
Which issue either good or ill;

That leavened every phase of life
Ordained of God this world to bless,—
The State, the Church, the Home, the School
And all that maketh righteousness;

That bade the lust of sensuous thirst
No longer ravage heart and mind,
That said to warring nations, Peace!
Put up thy sword! God's weapon find!

That planted righteousness so deep
Within the hearts and minds of men,
That skeptic sinner, saint and sage,
Thy precepts teach with tongue and pen.

Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done;
We daily pray with faith increased;
Work through our lives the answer sought
When earth from sin shall be released.

THE FATHER

Supreme, sublime, eternal God,
The Source, the sender of all good,
The author of all moral law
Revealer of true Fatherhood.

To Thee I bow in reverence
With all Thy earthly children wise,
Acknowledging Thy matchless will,
Beseeching light Thy way devise.

Thy love and justice I adore
As born from out a Father's heart,
Thy power and wisdom I avow,
Because they're but a Father's part.

Thy will, not mine, I came to do;
Thy truth, not mine, I came to tell;
Thy life, not mine, I came to show;
Thy love, not mine, can sin expell.

Thine only Son, nor all Thy sons
Would'st Thou withhold, that love deny,
Nor would they shrink from any task
Once grasping life with single eye;

Once seeing plain Thy Father love
In yearning heart, in wisdom's laws,
Thy will we cry not ours be done
Yea, though we may not trace the cause.

I feel Thy tender Fatherhood
In patient touch through all the past;
I hear Thy wooing strains of love
As boundless as its need is vast.

I feel Thy heart-throb's anxious quest
In search of wayward, wilful man,
I hear Thee say to sin-marred souls
Arise! Take heart! Return! Ye can!

I see Thy hand outstretched to greet
The world's despised, discouraged host;
I hear Thee say, "'Tis not my will
That one of good or bad be lost".

All that the Father giveth me
Shall learn to know His loving care;
And none can come to me except
The heart of God shall draw him there.

The Husband-man of vine and branch,
The source, and sovereign of all life,
The mover of men's minds and wills,
Destroyer of all germs of strife.

O, show through me, Thy Father heart!
That I to sinful men may prove
Thy boundless mercy, full and free,
Thy justice kind, sin's blight to move.

That I to prodigal may tell
Thy broken-hearted Father's love
And cause all prodigals to feel
The yearning heart of God above.

The heart that yearns while yet men stray
In wilful search of selfish lust,
The heart that yearns for their return
With all their actions still unjust.

That watches with a yearning hope
For smallest sign of penitence,
That runs to greet, embrace, forgive,
And treat as holy innocence.

The lost is found; the dead's alive;
This is the Father's chief desire;
Rejoice, bring forth the fatted calf,
And robe my son in best attire.

As far as East is from the West,
And heavens are high above the earth,
So great Thy loving kindness is
That none need fail of moral worth.

Thou sendest rain and sunshine warm
Upon the evil and the good;
The fields of just and unjust men
No law reflect but Fatherhood.

One barrier only can prevent
Thy sovereign love's enriching power,—
Man may refuse Thy laws to keep
And starve his soul of heaven's dower.

But if he wills these laws to break,
And wills the Father's plan to mar;
Still God is love, and love is law,
Though Dives view it from afar.

O God and Father of us all,
Help us to read anew Thy grace,
Help us to see with clearer eye
Thy life revealed in Jesus' face.

The Son who calls none good but God,
And yet to Philip makes reply,—
The Father, thou hast seen in me,
And through my life must glorify.

THE CROSS

O Thou who hast transformed the cross
From ignominious mode of death,
And made it history's jeweled fact
Adorning faith to latest breath,

Help us to walk with Thee dear Lord,
This path of comradeship in life,
Wherein we trace Thy love supreme,
Resigned to share through pain earth's
strife.

The world has always known the pangs
Of pain, and grief, and greed, and hate,
But not till Thou wast crucified
Did'st earth rise conqueror o'er fate.

The sacrament of sacrifice,
Writ deep and plain through aeons past,
No inspiration breathed on man
Or joy in struggle to the last.

The Lamb from the foundation slain
No note of triumph spoke to earth,
The crimsoned foot-prints in the march
No kinship knew 'twixt pain and mirth.

'Twas pain of body, mind, and heart,
Unconscious of the Father's plan,
Endurance grim, no solace gained,
Sin's ruthless punishment of man.

But Thou hast thrown God's search light,—
Love
So brightly o'er the blood-stained path,
That man's diviner nature sees
A plan of mercy, not of wrath.

The healing streams of sacrifice
So plainly flow from Calvary's cross,
That sin, and pain, and even death,
Bespeak us gain, instead of loss.

God's heart from all eternity
In suffering love the wretched seeks,
God's balm through sacrificial life
Golgotha, immemorial speaks.

No other love could save this world
Than that which loved it unto grief,
No lesser proof of perfect love
Could claim obedience and belief.

Our finite powers may fail to trace
The whys and wherefores of such pain,
Why God, omnipotent and just,
Should pierce the heart to grant us gain,

Why God might not have saved the world
From path so full of thorns and tears,
Why man might not have reached the goal
By smoother way and lesser fears.

But these are only thoughts of men
Who see but fragments of the whole,
Some day we'll see Thee face to face
And understand divine control.

Till then we'll rest in proof divine
Of God's exhausted earthly pleas,
And pray for light our steps to guide,
And faith to trust in Love's decrees;

For light and faith like Thine O Christ,
Which questioned not the Father's word,
Which drank submissively the cup
When duty's voice in love was heard.

The human falter in Thy faith
But linked Thee closer with our lot,
The light which dimmed a moment brief
Abides in gloom a cheering spot.

It binds us closer to Thy cross,
Thy loving fellowship makes plain,
Bespeaks in our Gethsemane
Thy nearness always to sustain.

"In all points tempted like as we",
With meaning full, our spirits cheer,
And though we stumble, yet we rise
In light of Thy example, clear.

Until in victory's process trained
We reach the heights of manhood's goal,
Where flesh and blood in strength of God
Triumphant sound the souls control.

Majestic faith transcends our fears,
Sublime submission lights the way,
With Jesus, Master of the flesh
Our darkest hour is turned to day.

We've caught the Saviour's point of view,
The cross as earth's redeeming power,—
"And I, if I be lifted up"
All men shall draw,—God haste the hour!

We see it as the only path,
Redemptive, not alone for sin,
But whosoever would be saved
The cross must know without, within.

Not Christ alone must Calvary know,
His cry "'Tis finished", ours must be,
We must be crucified with Him,
Complete His work,—the world set free.

The pattern He, in highest form,
The life of truth beyond degree,
Majestic in constraining love,
Inspirer of God's life to see.

Help us to hear Thy call afresh,—
"Deny thyself, take up thy cross":
The man who lives alone for self
Shall suffer death's ignoble loss.

Teach us O Christ, Thy sovereign power,
Revealed that day upon the tree,
When sin's malignant hand of hate
Would sweep from earth its enemy;

When nail-spiked feet and hands were Thine,
And thorn-pronged crown Thy brow did'st
pierce,

When mocking mobs of rulers, high,
Incensed the low to spite more fierce;

When every cruel, unloving act
Bethought of by the hosts of sin,
Bestowed their ignomy debased
Upon Thy spotless soul within;

When pain of heart through sense of sin
Was keener than the soldier's spear,
When sense of pity for their state
More deeply grieved than ruler's jeer;

When depths of God's redeeming love
Thy soul did'st flood with yearning
prayer,—

“Father forgive, they know not why
My life they take—Have mercy, spare!

Unselfish love their conscience pricked,
Unsullied life their hearts did'st probe,
Unbounded faith in God of right
Unstripped them of sin's masked robe.

No wonder that they smote their breasts
And turned away in anger white;
They stigmatized their own lost cause,
But glorified the God of Light.

O Christ of victory through defeat!
Herein we read of Calvary's power,
A life which loved e'en unto death,
Thy deepest love the closing hour.

THE RESURRECTION

O risen and exalted Christ,
We hail Thy resurrection life,
The proof of our immortal hope,
Love's holy triumph won through strife.

The voices of aeonian past
Had pregnant been with rumblings faint,
But loud and clear no note did'st sound
Through sage or prophet, bard or saint.

The dew-drop glistening on the blade
Bespoke a glorifying law,
Transforming atmospheric haze
To sparkling diamonds void of flaw;

The crocus 'neath the ice-bound earth
Awaits the hour of its release,
The velvet wingéd butterfly
Its crysalis bursts with grace and ease;

The rock-bound ledge no bands can forge
Against the seed in crevice dropped,
It may not reach fruition full
Expanding life cannot be stopped.

Where e'er we look on earth around
A rising upward greets our view,
But Lord of life and grave and death
In Thee alone fulfilment knew.

Immortal potency in man
Comes to itself in Thee supreme;
Earth's guesses and heart-longing cries
Henceforward break with shadowy dream.

The fogs which hitherto obscured
The sailor's course to final port,
By Thee were lifted and dispelled,
And breezes lent to sails support.

The haven found beyond earth's ken
No ship has since sailed back to tell,
But as her top-mast faded view
We heard her pilot cry, "All's well".

Her anchor may not yet be dropped,
Her sails all set may yet be filled,
But chart and compass Christ-bequeathed
All anxious fears on voyage have stilled.

And whether from horizon's view
We've sailed beyond from reach of eye,
Or yet are beating up the shore
Where billows wave and winds do sigh.

"I am the Resurrection life"!
We hear ring out along the course;
Thou art the risen Lord o'er death
To point man its eternal source.

What form that life shall wear beyond,
What form it once did wear on earth,
Is not its deepest truth for man
Or guarantee of highest worth.

To be, to think, to know, to live,
To rise supreme o'er sense and sin,
To feel ourselves as part of God,
And life eternal throb within;—

These, are Thy resurrection gifts,
Bestowed on all who live in thee;
Instinctive longing of the heart
Of normal personality.

The avenue of earth's escape
But glorifies the man to be,
Exalts the real, the permanent,
The endless in humanity;—

The man who triumphs over dust,
And says to time "Thy course is run,
Take back thy garb of earthly flesh,
Immortal form is now begun".

Earth's laws of limitation cease
To fix the bounds of Spirit freed;
Death now is swallowed up of life,
The grave but holds the dying seed.

Corruption's incorruptible
Bursts forth in bloom effulgent, pure,
And mortal's immortality
Its life through death now holds secure.

To Thee triumphant Son of God
We owe our faith so clear and deep,
In Thy safe guidance of the soul
Beyond the vale of human sleep,

Our faith in reunited loves,
Our faith in recognition's joy,
Our faith in Thy perfected plan
That heaven is home without alloy.

When in Thy likeness we shall rise
And face to face Thy glory see,
The things hereafter shall be known,
Earth's limitations all set free.

The mind shall see with Spirit's eye,
The soul shall hear with Spirit's ear,
The hand shall touch with Spirit's touch,
Ethereal form shall real appear.

But while we wait that heavenly dress
Beyond the realms of doubt and fear,
Sound clear and sweet Thy sovereign notes
Of victory over death,—Good cheer.

And help us rise from day to day
Victorious over self and sin,
Till life through death shall usher us
Triumphant sons, the gates within.

EPILOGUE

Victorious Christ, in ages past,
All-conquering Christ for time to come,
Our faith beholds Thee King of kings
With Truth as sceptre, Love as dome.

Thy influence daily grows apace,
The whole in time shall leavened be,
All life in spirit shall be lived
In honour to Thy majesty.

No sacred day shall separate
The other six from holy strife;
No priestly service shall control
The sanctities of daily life:

No special class shall feel the need
Of friendship with Thy spirit pure,
But all shall hail Thee King of Right
With precepts that alone endure:

The great in mind as well as heart
Shall bow in worship to Thy will;
The rich in gold as well as deeds
Shall vie Thy counsel to fulfill.

Cathedrals shall no more be built;
Nor call to prayer by chimes be heard;
But souls in Spirit and in Truth
Shall know Thy presence, feel Thy word.

The creeds and dogmas of the Church
Shall by the way-side fall and fade;
Their letter-laden forms and husks
The pure in heart no more shall aid.

Communion with the living God
Shall keep us ever in the Way
Of Him who was and is the Truth
To guide us to eternal day.

O Christ march on triumphantly,
The world needs sore Thy loving balm,
The hearts of men unconscious wait
Thy peace to comfort and to calm.

Help us to lift anew Thy cross
Throughout creation's realms of space;
Help us to sing anew Thy Love,
Proclaim in faith Thy Sovereign Grace.

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